

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended): A master information carrier for magnetic transfer comprising:

 a substrate having a pattern of protrusions and recesses corresponding to information to be transferred to a slave medium; and

 a magnetic layer formed on the pattern of protrusions and recesses of the substrate, wherein:

 an entire upper surface and ~~at least one of side surfaces~~ of the magnetic layer on the pattern of protrusions and recesses are coated with a protective coating.

2. (previously presented): The master information carrier for magnetic transfer, as defined in claim 1, wherein a diamond-like carbon (DLC) coating is used as the protective coating.

3. (withdrawn): A method for producing a magnetic disk which carries information represented by a signal pattern, the method comprising the steps of:

initial-magnetizing a magnetic recording layer by applying a magnetic field in a predetermined direction to a disk-shaped slave medium having the magnetic recording layer at least on a surface of a non-magnetic substrate; and

magnetically transferring information by applying a magnetic field in an approximately opposite direction to the direction in initial-magnetizing while the magnetic recording layer on the slave medium, which has been initial-magnetized and a surface of a disk-shaped master information carrier which includes a substrate having a pattern of protrusions and recesses corresponding to information to be transferred to the slave medium and a magnetic layer formed on the pattern of protrusions and recesses of the substrate are placed in close contact with each other, wherein:

the entire area of the magnetic layer on the pattern of protrusions and recesses is coated with a protective coating; and

surface free energy of the protective coating is in a range of 57 mN/m - 69 mN/m.

4. (previously presented): The master information carrier for magnetic transfer, as defined in claim 1, wherein a formation area of the protective coating is wider than a formation area of the magnetic layer.

5. (previously presented): The master information carrier for magnetic transfer, as defined in claim 1, wherein a formation area of the magnetic layer is the same or wider than a formation area of the pattern of protrusions and recesses of the substrate.

6. (previously presented): The master information carrier for magnetic transfer, as defined in claim 1, wherein the substrate further comprises at least one unused area which does not comprise the information to be transferred, wherein the unused area is coated with the protective coating.

7. (previously presented): The master information carrier for magnetic transfer, as defined in claim 1, further comprising at least one lower layer disposed between the magnetic layer and the protective coating.

8. (previously presented): The master information carrier for magnetic transfer, as defined in claim 1, wherein surface free energy of the protective coating is in a range of 57 mN/m - 69 mN/m.